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CHAPTER II

THE MATERIAL CULTURE

The material culture of Tepoztlán, in contrast to the non-material culture, preserves unmodified a large number of pre-Columbian traits.[1] The small number of the conquerors brought with them no great economic system with which to displace that already in operation among the Indians. The Mexican village did not, even before the Conquest, make all its own tools; villages specialized then, as now, in the manufacture of a few useful articles and imported the rest from other manufacturing centers.

With the exception of ironworking, which soon made obsolete the Indian techniques in stone, bone, shell, and copper, most of the elements contributed to the material culture by the Spaniards supplement rather than supplant technical systems of the Indians. Pre-Columbian patterns persist especially in the house, in house furnishings, and in cookery. Here there are many contributions from European culture, but these remain of secondary importance. The old techniques survive also in transportation, but there the post-

[1] Bandelier gave us a short account (A. F. Bandelier, *Report of an Archaeological Tour in Mexico in 1881*, "Papers of the Archaeological Institute of America, American Series" [Boston, 1884], II, 95–99, 120–52) of the material culture of Cholula in the state of Puebla, and Starr (Frederick Starr, *Notes upon the Ethnography of Southern Mexico*, reprinted from Vols. VIII and IX, *Proceedings of Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences*, Davenport, Iowa, 1900) has scattered notes on the material culture of many villages in Southern Mexico.